

REMARKS

Applicants request favorable reconsideration of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 27-29, 36-40, 46-53, and 55-57 are pending in the present application, with Claims 27 and 55 being independent. Claims 27, 36-39, and 46 are amended herein. Claims 30-35, 41-45, 54, and 58 have been cancelled without prejudice.

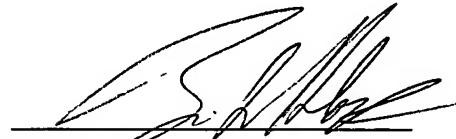
Initially, Applicants note with appreciation the indication that Claims 33-48 and 55-57 contain allowable subject matter, but were indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants note that Claim 55 is an independent claim. Thus, Applicants submit that Claim 55 should be allowed. Further, without conceding the propriety of the outstanding rejections, Applicants have amended Claim 27 to incorporate the allowable feature of Claim 35. Thus, Claim 27 should be allowed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under §§ 102 and 103 are requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 27 and 55. Dependent Claims 28, 29, 36-40, 46-53, 56 and 57 are also patentable, in their own right, for defining features of the invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims.

Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and a Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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